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## **Buffoons and bullies: James Joyce's priests in "Stephen Hero" and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", a study of revision**

Cynthia Ann Cotter

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BUFFOONS AND BULLIES: JAMES JOYCE'S  
PRIESTS IN STEPHEN HERO AND A PORTRAIT  
OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN  
A STUDY OF REVISION

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
English Composition

---

by  
Cynthia Ann Cotter

June 1991

BUFFOONS AND BULLIES: JAMES JOYCE'S  
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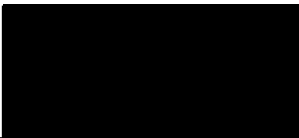
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by  
Cynthia Ann Cotter

June 1991

Approved by:

  
Robert A. Lee, Professor of English

June 12, 1991  
Date

  
Jennifer Randisi

  
Clark Mayo

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is dedicated with my love and thanks to my parents, Henry and Laura Wilmoth; my husband, Joe; my children, Laura and John; and my mother-in-law, Louise--all of whom provided sufficient amounts of support, inspiration and nagging to finally get the job done. It's been a long and winding road.

In loving memory of my Dad; "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead."



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## CHAPTER ONE:

### INTRODUCTION

Joyce was never proud of Stephen Hero. He began, completed and published Dubliners as he struggled with, brooded over, revised and, at one point, tried to burn Stephen Hero (Ellmann 314). He rewrote Stephen Hero several times, never to his satisfaction. After a lengthy illness, he suddenly envisioned and recreated Stephen Hero into A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Ellmann 264). Thirty years later, in 1934, Joyce was reluctant to give Sylvia Beach permission to publish the unfinished manuscript of Stephen Hero because he thought it bad writing (Ellmann 683).

Joyce was also probably unhappy with Stephen Hero because it lacked the clever structures of his other works; the stories of Dubliners are grouped according to the stages of human growth; A Portrait follows a gestation and birth progression; Ulysses is patterned after the Odyssey. Early on, Joyce felt that the structure of Stephen Hero was far too conventional (Ellmann 264). More importantly, he was probably dissatisfied with his first attempt at a novel because the tone of Stephen Hero is too close to satire; everything is given too easily to the reader. Joyce's forte is, of course, irony, in which the reader is called upon to dive beneath the surface to discover meaning. It is the focus of this thesis to examine the satire of Stephen Hero

and compare it to the irony of A Portrait, congratulating first one text and then the other on their respective successes, acknowledging all along that A Portrait is truly the superior creation whose style, structure, and tone remain qualitatively equivalent to Joyce's other works. This thesis concentrates on comparing Joyce's satiric and ironic presentation of the priests in both works. While drawing upon the expertise of many, this thesis employs as its chief model Northrop Frye's definitions of satire and irony from The Anatomy of Criticism.

Frye teaches that irony is ". . . a technique of saying as little and meaning as much as possible, or, in a more general way, a pattern of words that turns away from direct statement or its own obvious meaning. . . . Complete objectivity and suppression of all explicit moral judgments are essential. . . . Thus, pity and fear are not raised in ironic art: they are reflected to the reader from the art" (40). Joyce had very definite, very clear moral judgments about everything and one has no doubt that he wished others to share his opinions, but his works do not offer clearly drawn manifestos. Like Plato, Joyce knew that the teacher who can lead his students' thoughts to a specific deduction is more successful, his influence more permanent, than is the method of the instructor who employs a pedantic, lecturing method. As Marilyn French observes in The Book as

World: James Joyce's Ulysses, irony's suppression of overt authorial comment leaves gaps which the reader must fill--decisions about what exactly the author meant, judgments about character. These gaps necessitate the participation of the reader to "complete" the story, which, in turn, brings about cerebral stirrings and perhaps psychological change in the reader (36, 264-8). But, always, the reader must draw his conclusions from the information the author has offered. If one correctly reads the text, he will fill the gaps with the meaning which the ironic author intended.

Although he vehemently disagrees with Northrop Frye's conception of irony on occasion, Wayne C. Booth lends support to both Frye and this thesis by saying about irony, "It risks disaster more aggressively than any other device. But if it succeeds, it will succeed more strongly than any literal statement can do" (A Rhetoric of Irony 41-42). This success, Booth cites, is due to the fact that when a reader is engaged--needed to fulfill the creation of a work--he, once arriving upon the "meaning" of an irony, feels justified in congratulating himself on a job well done, which is, of course, one of the dearest pleasures of humankind. "Whenever an author conveys to his reader an unspoken point, he creates a sense of collusion against all those, whether in the story or out of it, who do not get that point. Irony is always thus in part a device for

excluding as well as for including, and those who are included, those who happen to have the necessary information to grasp the irony, cannot but derive at least part of their pleasure from a sense that others are excluded" (The Rhetoric of Fiction 304). Booth has also identified four criteria of irony which are both helpful and succinct. They complement Frye's definitions:

- 1) An irony must be intended: meant to be heard or read and understood.
- 2) An irony must be covert: intended to be reconstructed with meanings different from those on the surface.
- 3) An irony must be stable: once reconstruction of meaning is made, the reader is not invited to undermine it with further interpretations.
- 4) An irony must be finite: reconstructed meaning is local and limited (A Rhetoric of Irony 5-6).

In Booth's second criterion, we see again the integral quality of an ironic work; that is, it must have meaning beyond what is said literally. To reflect rather than project an idea or emotion, the ironic writer usually presents a situation or character pregnant with adjectival possibilities, but does not directly comment or reveal his attitude. The reader must then closely examine the details the author chose to describe and--sometimes more importantly--which details he chose not to describe. It is

often in the omitted details that one finds the ironist's attitude. Mario Domenichelli asserts "Joyce's style is *saturus*, but only seemingly so: in fact it is full of lapses, flaws, *manques*, holes, differential places that are the very source of irony, since irony can only spring forth from those empty places" (114).

In conclusion, this thesis posits that irony is a method of discourse in which the reader must work to extricate meaning from the surface language and mediate lapses in the text. As Domenichelli aptly phrased it, "The problem with Joyce is irony, a radical kind of irony through which one can (n)ever be certain of meaning" (115). Joyce's irony is a problem in that soon after one constructs meaning from it, another structure of meaning is built and destroys the first. The "problem," however, is paradoxically the power and beauty of Joyce's work. Constant creation, destruction and recreation of meanings are possible in Joyce's irony because of its complexity and craftsmanship.

It is neither the aim nor desire of this thesis to attempt to define Stephen Hero as a formal satire, to be categorized and shelved next to Gulliver's Travels; it cannot judiciously be done. Rather, this thesis acknowledges the observations of Frye, Booth and many others that a literary work can modulate between different genres. I assert that Stephen Hero borrows so generously from the

satiric tradition that its rhetoric becomes nearly inconsistent with Joyce's succeeding works. It is this inconsistency which makes the manuscript so interesting, for it is here that one hears Joyce finding his distinctive voice. Joyce was to become a master of irony: subtle and cunning, and as he wrote in Stephen Hero, he was to "elude the booted apparition with a bound" (34). Joyce's irony is such that the text can only incompletely be read quickly, and such a reading will certainly leave the astute reader wondering, "What was that all about?" It must be read again (and again and again) for full meaning. But though Stephen Hero requires some thoughtful study, Joyce's feelings are comparatively easy to ascertain. This is not to imply that Stephen Hero is a facile piece of work, devoid of any meaning except surface, but because it employs techniques of satire, Joyce's presence is felt more readily. Joyce's perception of the great artist defines a creator of irony, not satire. "The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails" (A Portrait 483).

As Frye expresses it, "The chief distinction between irony and satire is that satire is militant irony: its moral norms are relatively clear, and it assumes standards against which the grotesque and absurd are measured. . .

whenever a reader is not sure what the author's attitude is or what our own is supposed to be, we have irony with little satire" (223). The reader is aware nearly every moment in Stephen Hero what Joyce's attitude is and what his own should be. For example, Stephen Hero is undeniably more straightforwardly funny than is A Portrait. Joyce was always a bit puzzled that his readers didn't seem to appreciate the humor of his ironic work more--no one enjoyed a good laugh more than Joyce--but, quite simply, it is more difficult to find something humorous if we are not certain of the speaker's (or writer's) intentions or when we are certain of impending doom. This is one triumph of the discarded Stephen Hero; we have no doubt that it is funny when Maurice hits his head on a church pew; however, the reader is likely to be uncertain whether to laugh or warmly support little Stephen as he marches to the president's office in search of justice in A Portrait.

As irony's foremost quality is meaning beyond the surface, satire's most integral feature is criticism or illumination of a specific flaw of humankind. As Edward A. Bloom writes in Satire's Persuasive Voice, satire reveals "a state of mind or feeling, a critical outlook on some detail or quality of existence" (36). Every student of Joyce knows how fundamental to all his works is his concept of the three "nets" of his Irish society: religion (the Catholic



church), nationality (Ireland), and family (particularly the tensions between male and female.) The suffocating oppression of each of these nets was targeted in all of Joyce's work. In A Portrait, these nets are dangerous; to be caught in them is to drown. Beneath the surface language, the irony is sinister and often bitter. While the same three nets loom in Stephen Hero, they are ridiculed and only the foolish need be caught ("Foolish," however, may apply to all). The nets are absurd rather than treacherous; the characters are ridiculous instead of dangerous. If this is so, it is further evidence that Stephen Hero is largely satiric. As Northrop Frye writes, ". . . Two things, then, are essential to satire; one is wit or humor founded on fantasy or a sense of the absurd, the other is an object of attack" (223-224). According to Leonard Feinberg in his Introduction to Satire, ". . . satirists use all the comic devices for the purpose of criticism. . . incongruity, surprise, pretense, and catering to the superiority of the audience" (101). All these elements are certainly found in Stephen Hero. Feinberg further asserts that satire ridicules "man's naive acceptance of individuals and institutions at face value and presents a juxtaposition of reality versus pretense" (3). Joyce consistently contrasts the noble or holy pretense of the nets with their ridiculous or coarse reality. This juxtaposition is present throughout

Stephen Hero and even Stephen does not escape exposure. Although he is intellectually superior to all other characters in the text, the reader quickly learns not to trust his pretentious self-image. While the reader of A Portrait may often be uncertain of whether he is supposed to feel sympathy or disdain for Stephen, he experiences no ambivalence about laughing at Stephen's inflated ego in Stephen Hero.

The original purpose of this thesis was to examine Joyce's revision from satire to irony as exemplified by all three nets. I began researching the net of religion because I thought it the least interesting and best gotten over with quickly. However, like many other peasants, I found myself mesmerized by Joyce's priests, unable to get past the parish door. The subject which I once regarded as tedious now fascinates me. Although Joyce's work warns of the net of marriage, he eventually, if not altogether willingly, entered that net himself. Although his work warns of nationalism and he spent his adult life in self-exile, he wrote of nothing but his Irish homeland. In contrast, his hatred of priests never wavered and remained consistent in his work and personal life. This thesis will concentrate on fishermen who use the net of religion: the priests. Joyce believed that the Catholic philosophy was "the most coherent

attempt" to crush freedom and individuality. Stanislaus Joyce writes of his brother James,

He felt it was imperative that he should save his real spiritual life from being overlaid and crushed by a false one that he had outgrown. He believed that poets in the measure of their gifts were the repositories of the genuine spiritual life of their race and that priests were usurpers. (107-8)

The attention required to make a useful examination of any of Joyce's nets is considerable and I have chosen not to slight any by attempting to explicate them all at once.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### SATIRE IN STEPHEN HERO

One of the most conspicuous revisions of characters from the satiric to the ironic in the two works is that of the priests. In Stephen Hero, they are presented very obviously as impotent, ignorant, and pretentious, and the grip with which they hold the nation of Ireland is an unsteady one, likely to drop everyone into disaster. The reader has no difficulty deciphering Joyce's derisive attitude toward the priests. Their meddling influence is everywhere, but it is presented most thoroughly at Clongowes College, where the priests are in charge of developing the minds of Ireland's young men, the future of the nation. In a satirical mode, the incongruity of priests in the role of educators is frequently lampooned. The text reveals that their primary function is to stand in the way of any real learning. They act mainly as censors to filter out all the "garbage of modern society" (91). Put another way, they feel compelled to obliterate the possibility of any new ideas entering the heads of their charges. Father Butt and Father Dillon exist as the most developed priest characters; they stand as the general standard, and they seem nearly interchangeable. The priest in Stephen Hero is much like an albino mouse; once having seen one, one knows the rest as well.

"The dean of the college was professor of English, Father Butt. He was reputed the most able man in the college: he was a philosopher and a scholar" (25). The colon indicates an explanation or verification. He is the "most able man" because he is a philosopher and scholar. The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary defines a philosopher as "a lover of wisdom: one who devotes himself to the search for fundamental truth" (2154). "Scholar" is defined as a "student," one who learns (2665). The priest's surname gives the reader doubt immediately but this statement asks that the reader suspend judgment very briefly. Joyce proceeds to juxtapose facts with this statement. The priest is neither a scholar nor a philosopher. "Scholar" and "student" imply that one is open-minded, receptive to new ideas and change. "Philosopher" also implies an eternal search for ultimate truth, untainted by personal persuasion. Joyce disproves both descriptions in the following sentence. Again the phrases are linked by colon, the language short and choppy, rendering the impression of statement of undisputed fact. Butt has gone to great efforts to prove that Shakespeare was a Roman Catholic and to prove that he had sole authorship of the writing credited to him. It is obvious that he is neither receptive to nor tolerant of new ideas or the possibility of change. He admires Shakespeare, but if his

ghost rose and confessed to be other than Catholic, Butt would no doubt lose all interest in him. As a Catholic priest, his reference of truth is clear and unchanging. The assertion that Butt is a philosopher and a scholar is juxtaposed with his Shakespearean hobbies. He is not interested in learning anything which may tamper with his crystallized concept of truth. In the satiric tradition, the reader is not allowed to take Father Butt at face value. Joyce compels his audience to look beyond the description of Father Butt's intellectual abilities and to weigh the evidence of the priest's actions to conclude that he is, after all, a butt. Although it is certain he is not a philosopher, Father Butt may indeed be "the most able man in the college," representing a resounding defeat of education.

Joyce compares Father Butt's mental agility to that of Stephen's younger brother, Maurice, to reinforce the fact that the priest is neither a philosopher nor a scholar. "Stephen . . . launched forth into a copious explanation of his theories. . . when Maurice had understood the meanings of the terms and had put these meanings carefully together, [he] agreed that Stephen's theory was the right one"; "Father Butt listened and, even more readily than Maurice had done, agreed with them all" (26,27). Maurice's motivation, clearly, is natural, the youthful worship of an older brother. Father Butt's motivation for agreeing with

Stephen's theory is an attempt to conceal ignorance. He will not admit confusion at any cost. Father Butt completely misunderstands Stephen's quotation from Newman but refuses to acknowledge the fact and tries to hide his error.

--In that sentence of Newman's . . . 'I hope I'm not detaining you'

--Not at all! not at all!

--No, no...

--Yes, yes Mr. Daedalus, I see... I quite see your point...detain... (Stephen Hero 27-28)

The ellipses between the phrases of Butt's claim to understanding, accompanied by the immediate end of the scene, imply that he still does not understand what Stephen has said, or what his mistake has been. Father Butt's retaliation for this embarrassment is to demonstrate to Stephen his skill in lighting a fire and to the priest this skill is at least as valuable as comprehension of literary theory. He is meticulous in making a "small fire in a huge grate," making "neat wisps of paper and carefully disposing them." These actions are futile; untidy paper burns as well. The superfluous "at a crisis he produced . . . three dirty candle butts" reveals satire's everpresent pretense in the alazon.<sup>1</sup> Father Butt "looked up at Stephen with an air of triumph." He really feels he has bested Stephen by this menial task;

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<sup>1</sup>"Alazon: A deceiving or self-deceived character in fiction, normally an object of ridicule in comedy or satire." (Frye 365)

--There is an art, Mr. Daedalus, in lighting a fire. . . . That's it: a useful art. We have the useful arts and we have the liberal arts. (Stephen Hero 28)

Father Butt's declaration coupled with his painstaking actions imply that he finds carefully done physical labor superior to intellectual exertion. The incongruity of a professor of English and Dean of Studies valuing the simple act of lighting a fire over the assimilation of literary theory renders the priest irrevocably absurd. Joyce devotes an entire paragraph to Father Butt's intricate operation and grants him nearly the exact same space to lecture on Shakespeare, which is a structurally effective way to again call attention to his intellectual shortcomings.

Reading through Twelfth Night, Father Butt skips the clown's songs and, when Stephen inquires after them, the priest says that "it is improbable such a question would be on the paper" (28). This is an example of a technique Joyce experiments with in Stephen Hero and will employ in his succeeding novels, including A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. This technique presents a character dealing--or misdealing--with literature and thus exposing his flaws or strengths. In the spirit of satire, this technique appeals to Joyce's audience, who is assumed to be familiar with literature outside the text and competent to use knowledge of the play to make a reasonable estimate about the character who has revealed his knowledge of the work.



Joyce's satiric knife cuts in two directions here. First, it slices away the assumption that a teacher is concerned with complete comprehension; because the clown's songs are not likely to appear on the test, they are unimportant to Father Butt. As Joyce alluded in the fire-lighting scene, Father Butt again values deed over thought. His teaching style demands the product of passing a test, rather than the process of understanding a great work of art.

Secondly and more significantly, this technique reveals Father Butt's pretense, ignorance, and lack of curiosity. Father Butt hasn't the faintest idea why Shakespeare penned the clown's songs and, worse still, it has never occurred to him that he should ponder their significance. Under no circumstances, however, will he abandon the pretense of a "philosopher and scholar" to admit the truth of his ignorance. He offers a limp historical fact in which a pause is used again to signal ignorance: "It was a custom at that time for noblemen to have clowns sing to them...for amusement" (29). It is nearly incomprehensible that one who admires, teaches, and delivers papers on Shakespeare would have never thought to examine the significance of the clown's songs, particularly in Twelfth Night, where the clown remains on stage after the rest of the cast has exited and concludes the play with a song. The fact that the solitary clown dramatically finishes the play demands

attention, but the important detail reaches an impasse at Father Butt's impregnable mind. (Father Butt likely admires this play particularly because of the title; it attracts him because it is called after the feast in honor of the wise men discovering the Christ child.) Any thoughtful Shakespeare scholar knows that Feste, the clown, is an indispensable character who lends valuable insight into the other characters. As John Hollander says of Feste, "His insights into the action are continuous, and his every comment is telling" (138). Peter Bilton tells us that "Feste "is free, not only to comment on all the other main characters but also to have his comments assessed without ironic reference to any bias he may have" (96). As Kenneth Muir observes, Feste "has an unerring instinct for singing appropriate songs to his clients" (97). He constantly undercuts the insincerity and affectation of the surrounding characters. He reveals truth in both the actions and motivations surrounding him. Joyce's technique of literary reference makes a connection between the pretentious Orsino/Father Butt and the shrewd Feste/Stephen. Stephen feigns ignorance and thus reveals Father Butt's intellectual inertia; Feste observes; "For folly that he wisely shows is fit;/ But wise men, folly-fall'n, quite taint their wit" (Twelfth Night III. ii. 64-65).

As for Feste's final song, it is both a summation of the play and a keen commentary on the ages of man plummeting into a lost paradise (Muir 97). Feste observes the futility of human action and passion juxtaposed against the forces of nature. He goes so far as to step out of character as the other actors fade back into humanity to remark that even the play itself is a fleeting gesture. The reader thinks of Father Butt who will not step out of his "scholarly" persona to admit his humanity. Joyce tells us that Father Butt is "an elderly greyhound of a man" and from this the reader may assume that he has been "teaching" Shakespeare for some many years (25). In two very economical sentences using literary reference, Joyce has revealed that Father Butt is completely unfit for his post by reason of longstanding ignorance and uninquisitiveness.

Initially, the reader may regard the greyhound metaphor as simply sarcastic: Joyce smirking at the comparison of the muddled and "chalky" Father Butt to the lithe and mercurial greyhound, but upon further reflection, the reader realizes that the metaphor works upon another level, echoing the theme of Irish oppression. Greyhounds were for hundreds of years the exclusive property of the English aristocracy. In fact, many experts believe that "greyhound" is a corruption of the word "great," as the dog was associated with "great" people. "Under Number 31 of the Laws of

Canute, enacted in 1016, 'No mean person may keepe any greyhounds...' (The New Dog Encyclopedia 532). Perhaps Joyce is urging the reader to conclude that priests, too, are the exclusive property of the elite.

Joyce again uses literary reference outside the text to evidence Father Butt's mental stagnation. Lecturing on Othello, the priest misses the counterpoint of the many human emotions presented in the great tragedy and settles upon the singular interpretation that the play is about the pitfalls of jealousy (29). The president of the college, Father Dillon, has restricted some of the students from attending a performance of Othello due to the many "coarse expressions." Given the fact that Father Butt has completely missed nearly all the psychological themes in Othello, the reader can infer also that he has somehow also failed to grasp the meanings of the "coarse expressions"--which, truly, is an amazing feat. Father Butt is not only ignorant of the complex emotional issues examined in Othello, such as love and prejudice, but of the meaning of blunt sexual euphemisms like "an old black ram is tuppung your white ewe" and "your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs" as well (Othello, I. i. 96-7, 128-9). Joyce hints that, in addition to intellectual censure, priests, by their very profession, necessarily restrict any exploration of emotion other than religious

adoration/zeal. The moral norm--to use Northrop Frye's phrase--that Joyce is positing is education and growth; minds ought to be free to move without restrictions of ignorance or prejudice, to appreciate art, which celebrates humanity. What is attacked here is the figure of the priest in the position of educator. Joyce makes clear that it is absurd for one who is so severely separate from much of what makes us human to "teach" art, which is borne of human experience: the base as well as the refined.

Because Father Dillon at least realizes the meanings of the "coarse expressions" of Othello, the reader may anticipate that he is slightly more intelligent than Father Butt; however, the two are nearly interchangeable. Their existence as two separate characters serves Joyce's purpose in asserting that all priests are unsuitable educators. Satire deals with types, not individuals. Satiric works are often criticized for presenting caricatures rather than multi-faceted characters but this is actually a deliberate rhetorical strategy. The aim of satire is to appeal to the intellect not to emotion. As Leonard Feinberg notes "one of the reasons for the satirist's avoidance of deep insight into character is that such insight usually leads to sympathy. But the satirist does not want his reader to sympathize--he wants him to smile wryly" (232). Father Dillon has, after all, chosen to ban one of the greatest

tragedies of all time because of a few vulgar sexual references which function as important statements of character concerning Iago and Roderigo; again, literary reference is used to expose one of Joyce's characters as ignorant.

Stephen's essay "Art and Life" is a backdrop to accentuate the ignorance and pretence of both Father Butt and President Dillon. First of all, Stephen himself is not safe from Joyce's satire and is rendered ridiculous by virtue of his pretension throughout the conception, composition, and delivery of his essay. He is a true eiron only when set against the priests on two occasions in the process: when he argues with President Dillon for the right to read his essay and when Father Butt "defends" Stephen after reading his essay. This is a crucial point. Stephen is ridiculous except when compared to the priests. At his very worst, Stephen always bests the priests. Stephen's pretension is largely the folly of youth; the priests' pretension has not worn away with age. Stephen is intellectually superior to all other characters in the novel and has some justification for his arrogance. If he is ridiculous, he will outgrow it; the priests are ridiculous without any justification save the collars round their necks and give no hope of maturation.

Joyce chooses to record the entire argument between Stephen and President Dillon regarding the reading of Stephen's paper before the Debating Society so that the reader feels that he judges for himself the pernicious censorship of the priest as educator. It is an eight page episode with only the scantest narrative interjection; it reads more like a court report or script than a novel. This lengthy dialogue, nearly devoid of narrative guide, is a somewhat precarious technique that is frequent and not always successful in Stephen Hero but is perfected and employed in A Portrait. One of this technique's successes in Stephen Hero is Stephen's dispute with President Dillon. It is a lively and engaging argument that serves Joyce's purpose in revealing the priest to be an improper nurturer of the intellect. Joyce's intention is to give the illusion that he steps away from the two characters, enabling the reader to listen and judge uninterrupted. Joyce unobtrusively leads his audience to make the proper decisions about the characters. The intelligent reader must come to Joyce's intended conclusion by way of the details Joyce chooses to provide. It is clear that Stephen trounces President Dillon on the field of argumentative battle, particularly when Stephen asks for the source of the priest's opinion of Ibsen and finds that Dillon relies on information from the papers he himself does not respect, for

he has read not a single line of Ibsen (93). The argument, like Butt's comments on Shakespeare, appeals again to the most literate reader who, possessing some knowledge of the great writers to whom Stephen refers, may make further evaluations about President Dillon and Stephen. The most significant and revealing references are those to Saint Thomas Aquinas. In the first draft of Stephen Hero, Joyce writes that Stephen's "Esthetic was in main <<applied Aquinas>>" [sic] (Stephen Hero 77). The marks indicate a later deletion--perhaps Joyce's early label made it too easy for his readers--but the argument and Stephen's essay make clear the importance of Aquinian theory in Stephen's notion of Art. One would assume that because Saint Thomas Aquinas is a revered founder of the Catholic Church and his Summa Theologica is the source of definition for thousands of religious quandaries that a priest would be a capable opponent in any argument concerning Aquinian theory; however, in the satiric tradition, Joyce never allows one to assume and be concurrently correct.

Initially, President Dillon separates Aquinas from the "freethinkers" Stephen quotes on the basis of religion. Many of the others are atheistic and hence unsuitable references (93). As the debate progresses to the definition of Art and Beauty, the priest is forced to abandon Aquinas, illuminating both Dillon's ignorance and his hypocrisy; he



tells Stephen that "there are parts of Aquinas which no priest would think of announcing in the pulpit" (95). He asserts that Stephen's theory "pushed to its logical conclusion would emancipate the poet from all moral laws...I suppose you mean Art for Art's sake." He feels that art which does not elevate man's soul is nefarious, but as Stephen correctly quips, "I have only pushed to its logical conclusion the definition Aquinas has given of the beautiful.... Aquinas is certainly on the side of the capable artist. I hear no mention of instruction or elevation" (95, 96). Saint Thomas states, in fact, "The gifts of the Holy Ghost perfect man in matters concerning a good life, while art is not directed to such matters, but to external things that can be made, since art is the right reason, not about things to be done, but about things to be made" (Summa Theologica, Vol. II, p. 92). "The greatest doctor of the Church"--as President Dillon calls Aquinas--has spoken quite clearly; the purpose of art is not necessarily to elevate man (95). President Dillon has been hoist by his own petard. Stephen has used the very doctrine of the Catholic Church to protect his right to create unfettered by priestly stricture. President Dillon repeatedly objects to the baseness of humanity presented in modern art, but Stephen's assertion that public opinion should not dictate moral standards to the artist is

supported by Aquinas: "...an artist is said to make a true work when it is in accordance with his art" (Summa Theologica, Vol. I, 125). His essay heralds "...beauty, the splendour of truth has been born," which harkens to Aquinas' "For as long as the geometrician demonstrates the truth, it does not matter how his appetitive part may be affected, whether he be joyful or angry" (Stephen Hero 80; Summa Theologica, Vol. II, 37). Stephen, in fact, echoes Aquinas' example in his essay when he writes "It is absurd... to prohibit the elective courses of the artist in his revelation of the beautiful as it would be for a police-magistrate to prohibit any two sides of a triangle from being together greater than the third side" (80). Stephen's essay relies heavily on Aquinas, but, ignorant of this fact, President Dillon says, "It is certainly not the theory of art which is respected in this college" (91). The satiric incongruity of this statement is quite humorous. The priests teach in strict accordance to their religion in a staunchly Catholic College, but they do not recognize nor respect the teachings of the founding father of their religious doctrine. The ultimate concern of President Dillon is unmasked by his statement: "I should not care for any one to identify the ideas in your essay with the teaching in our college. We receive this college in trust" (94). Money is paramount for President Dillon; Conglowes

College might lose some valuable sponsorship if it were found that one of the students has embraced some of Saint Thomas Aquinas' teachings.

At last, President Dillon reaches the end of the path; the priests' house is in sight and he wishes to be rid of the troublesome Stephen. The end of the path means escape for him; he no longer must argue with Stephen and dismisses both him and his theories by saying, "I do not predict much success for your advocacy in this country...Our people have their faith and they are happy. They are faithful to their Church and the Church is sufficient for them" (97). The priest is, unfortunately, entirely correct. Joyce illustrates that the Irish have placed their faith in priests--not necessarily in Catholic doctrine--and the Church, sadly, is "sufficient." The people offer up their "faith": their loyalty, belief and trust while the Church is merely "sufficient," an adjective suggesting the barest minimum required to keep this faith. The Irish have sworn allegiance to priests who do not even understand the foundations upon which the Church is built. With his impenetratable sanctuary in sight, President Dillon concludes the meeting with, "Begin to look at the bright side of things, Mr Daedalus. Art should be healthy first of all" (98). It is neither poet nor scholar he quotes, but the maxim of the priesthood. "Healthy" implies a static

condition, a lack of irregularity or fluctuation, the state of affairs which maintains the priests' puissance. The forthcoming reception of Stephen's paper proves the priest's evaluation of the Irish people to be dismally true and serves as a microcosmic presentation of what Frye terms the satiric counterpart to the "comedy of escape." Frye describes this as

the second or quixotic phase of satire in which the setting of ideas and generalizations of theories and dogmas over against the life they are supposed to explain. ... Thus philosophical pedantry becomes, as every target of satire eventually does, a form of romanticism or the imposing of over-simplified ideals on experience. ... The satiric attitude here is neither philosophical nor anti-philosophical, but an expression of the hypothetical form of art. Satire on ideas is only the special kind of art that defends its own creative detachment. ... no one system can contain the arts as they stand. ... Satire on systems of reasoning, especially on the social effects of such systems, is art's first line of defense against all such invasions. (230-231)

Joyce has presented the youthfully egocentric Stephen as intellectually superior to all other characters. He has revealed the priest-educator necessarily unfit by reason of religious prejudice and simple ignorance. The passage detailing the delivery and reception of Stephen's essay is a concise presentation of the effects of an unsuitable educational force. Joyce's rhetorical purpose in choosing the other young men of the college to represent the priestly victory over unfettered learning is a keenly satiric pronouncement about Irish society in general and is nearly

completely opposite to A Portrait, wherein Stephen is mesmerized by the priest and his peers emerge unscathed (A Portrait, Chapter Two). The young college students are the most apt to facilitate change in their society; they are the most learned of this Irish society; they are Ireland's future. Many seek some sort of social reform--a free Irish state, women's equality, for example--but under the influence of priestly education, they cannot tolerate the "dissemination" of individual thought and become epitomes of satire's absurd society. Stephen's essay is, indeed, "applied Aquinas"; the recreation of the doctrine put forth by one of the greatest thinkers of the Church. But these young Catholic minds have been so shaped by the "education" of the ignorant priests that they can neither recognize this nor endure any deviation from the priestly design. This all is, after all, a debating society. The thought processes of these young men have been so stricken that there is no debate; there is only blind misunderstanding or blind attack. On one hand, Madden and Whelan admire Stephen's language and writing but do not comprehend the meaning of his words; on the other hand, Magee and the rest of the society see the essay's application of Aquinian theory, but only in its defiance of priestly ordinances (81, 101, 102-109). This is truly the society Northrup Frye describes in the second phase of satire; this "genre illuminates society

as ridiculous, pretentious and often criminal but it is also permanent; in this mode there is no hope for correction of the problematic society, only escape"--as Stephen ultimately attempts (226, 229). At the end of his debate, Stephen refuses to rebut, knowing how utterly futile such a gesture would be in this hopelessly conquered society. As Leonard Feinberg asserts, "there is wrong in the world but nothing much is likely to be done about it" (258).

This is Joyce's concept of a "priest-ridden race" in miniature. Those best equipped to "fly by" the net of religion--young, single, "educated" men--choose instead to flock and descend upon Stephen. Magee's accusation that Stephen does not "understand the true purport of the theory he propounded" is the "signal for a general attack" (102). Father Butt rises to speak and "the benches applauded with excitement and settled themselves to hear a denunciation *ex cathedra*" (103). Father Butt stands as a paragon of satiric incongruity; he is simultaneously God's representative, forgiving Stephen of his aesthetic sins, and the devil's speaker, defending a heretic. There is no need to further attack Stephen; the priest may not be fully conscious of this fact, but may intuitively know that the immovability of Catholicism has prevailed over the threat of individual thought. Father Butt again reveals his ignorance of things literary: "...Father Butt confessed that it was a new

sensation for him to hear Thomas Aquinas quoted as an authority on esthetic philosophy" (104). He says he values Stephen's essay because of the "lively discussion" it inspires, which reveals his ignorance of humanity as well. (To call this rabid attack a "lively discussion" might well be compared to deeming public stoning a robust competitive sport.) Father Butt can well afford to be the "*advocatus diaboli*" (103). After generations of priestly instruction, the old sow has learned well to eat her farrow and, hence, Father Butt can once again don the mask of the understanding clergyman: the perennial good fellow, "the philosopher and scholar" who asserts that Stephen must have a "fuller knowledge" to correctly interpret Saint Thomas Aquinas (104). Stephen's paper falls upon ears deafened by the priests' masses and chalky lectures. There is no hope of advocacy nor even tolerance of Stephen's intelligence in Ireland. Due to Joyce's satire, we can dismiss priests and their followers as stupid and walk away as Stephen does. The same ideas appear in A Portrait, but with malice instead of humor. In the revision, Stephen's peers are victims, whereas in the original text of Stephen Hero they are participants in intellectual oppression. The priests of A Portrait are not intimidated by literature, but, rather, they wield it as a cruel weapon.

### CHAPTER THREE:

#### IRONY IN A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

The shadowing presence of the priest is re-presented in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, wherein satiric laughter is replaced by ironic silence. Joyce does not respond to nor comment on the priests' fearsome powers and undisputable cruelty in the revised novel. The paradox of the priest as both shepherd and wolf to his flock demands that the reader step in and fill Joyce's silence. A Portrait illuminates everything that Stephen Hero does but the recreation is faithful to Joyce's ultimate voice and role as creator;

The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood and then a fluid and lambent narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, it impersonalizes itself, so to speak. (A Portrait 483)

One may consider Stephen Hero as the "fluid and lambent narrative" and A Portrait as the perfected, "impersonalized" final product. True to his words, Joyce presents A Portrait without any overt authorial prejudice, but nonetheless succeeds in bringing the reader to his intended conclusion.

The revised character of Stephen, in stark contrast to his predecessor, makes no direct comments concerning his fellows. Joyce withholds even his characters' "explicit moral judgments," obliging the reader to "step in" and collude with Joyce to attain meaning (Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism 40, Marilyn French The Book as World 61). Like



satire, irony appeals to the superiority of its audience, as Wayne C. Booth notes in A Rhetoric of Irony. That is not to say that the astute reader of both satiric and ironic works is to take things at face value. Only an inferior reader would accept the surface language as the author's intended meaning. The authors of both satiric and ironic works require that the reader delve beyond the surface language to attain meaning. This task is comparatively easy for the reader of a satiric text; the author's intended meaning is made obvious by the absurdity of the individuals and institutions targeted for attack in the work. The reader of an ironic work, however, has a more difficult task. The author's intended meaning is subtle and covert; the author offers no loud, obvious guidelines for his reader. In an ironic work, only the target without authorial comment exists and, hence, the reader must decode meaning from context, diction, and by filling for himself the gaps left by the absence of adjectives, adverbs, and authorial judgments.

A Portrait employs many of the same techniques Stephen Hero does but the reader of the revised text is moved to shudder at and recoil from the priests, rather than laugh and discount them as he does with the earlier text. This is so because of the different modes of discourse. Satire--founded on humor or fantasy--deals with types or caricatures

who are easily lampooned then dismissed. Irony--founded on ambiguity--deals with characters which are individuals and are not easily dismissed. Whether hypocritical or dangerous or both, the priests of A Portrait are consistently powerful; it is the careful selection and deletion of detail that make this crucial revision from satire to irony.

The character of Stephen as a young child makes an effective vehicle of irony not possible in Stephen Hero. At the age of "half-past six" in A Portrait, Stephen does not accuse or blame the priests, but presents a juxtaposition of the ideal versus reality. Stephen wonders if it is a sin for a priest to be angry; he knows that it is a sin for the rest of the world, but he decides that Father Arnall "was allowed because a priest would know what a sin was and would not do it" (292). But this simply is not true; the priest is very angry with the boys: "his face was blacklooking and his eyes were staring though his voice was so quiet" and his face is "a little red from the wax he was in" (292). To Stephen's very Catholic mind it is simply not possible that Arnall is angry in spite of the undisputable fact that he is. Stephen allows himself to wonder, "But if he did do it one time by mistake what would he do to go to confession?" (292) What indeed? The priest is to be God's representative on Earth, a perfect being, one without sin; he is the only vessel capable of washing away sin from those

who confess to him. He is the highest example of human moral attainment. If he sins, who will absolve him? The Catholic God requires a mediator superior to the confessor. If the impossible happens--if a priest sins--what will happen? Stephen constructs an order of absolution; if the priest sins, he will confess to the minister, who will go to the rector, who will go to the provincial, who will go to the general of the Jesuits. Stephen ends there, compelling the reader to ask him "but what after that?" The ideal is that priests do not sin; the reality is that they do. It is not for Stephen but the reader to come to this conclusion. This is a good example of irony as Frye defines it: "a pattern of words that turns away from direct statement or its own obvious meaning" (40).

Similarly, when the Prefect of Studies, Father Dolan, obviously takes an intensely sadistic pleasure from beating little boys, Joyce does not inform the reader as to what his reaction should be; he instead presents the situation objectively, withholding all adjectives and adverbs. The prefect arrives quietly, then cracks his pandybat on the last desk and asks if any boys want pandybatting. Joyce offers no comment but it seems the priest is clearly hopeful of the possibility. Beating Flemming isn't enough for him; he pokes another boy in the ribs with his bat. He beats Stephen, who has been excused from work, then, seeing no

other excuse for torture, leaves. He shouts a gleeful "Hoho!" at the prospect of beating a child and his maniacal repetitions assure any doubters that he looks forward to punishment.

--Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, said the prefect of studies. Make up your minds for that. Every day Father Dolan.

--Get at your work, all of you, cried the prefect of studies from the door. Father Dolan will be in every day to see if any boy, any lazy idle little loafer wants flogging. Every day. Every day. (293-6)

The boys must "make up their minds" that there will be daily beatings; there is no escape, no possibility that the boys will be "good" one day. The repetition of "tomorrow" and "every day" implies absolute eternity: *Saecula saeculorum*. The image of a priest rendering hell on Earth is a stark juxtaposition of ideal and reality. The reference to literature outside the text, as examined earlier, is a technique with which Joyce experimented in Stephen Hero. In the early novel, this technique is used primarily to expose the ignorance of the priests; here, in contrast, it is used to reinforce their absolute power. "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" echoes, of course, MacBeth's soliloquy after the death of his queen. The reference makes clear how hopeless the boys' situation is and how intent Dolan is upon breaking any nuance of spirit in his charges. The passage serves to remind the boys that "all our yesterdays have lighted fools/The way to dusty death. . ." that life is "a

tale/Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,/ Signifying nothing" (MacBeth, V.v. 2340-9). Any cleverness, any pranks and every act of defiance are utterly futile, for all roads lead to death. Dolan tells them "make up your minds for that." It is like telling a little child that Winter will follow Fall; Dolan and his merciless pandybat are inescapable, as is the dismal march to oblivion. They will "pace from day to day/To the last syllable of recorded time" (MacBeth, V.v. 2341-2). That all life on earth is nothing but worthless dust is a troublesome conclusion in Christianity. The foreboding image of a priest beating little boys to break up the mortal death march is even more repulsive. Joyce selected Shakespeare's most discomfiting and sinister commentary on man's existence and sent it twisting from the mouth of the entity he saw as the most debilitating to man's spirit to create a marriage of despair and inescapable doom. It is an effective use of economy not only to use the repetition of just one word to inject a plethora of ominous images, but to do it with borrowed words serves to add a feeling of conspiracy to the scene. By using Shakespeare's words, Joyce makes clear that Father Dolan's perspective is not unique. With both Shakespeare and Joyce chanting "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow," the reader cannot help but feel that humanity's transcribers agree that life is a fleeting and futile experience.

Neither can the reader dismiss the priest's bleak point of view as isolated and deviant. Just as the boys in the classroom feel trapped by the priest, the reader feels similarly trapped by Joyce's literary reference. In this way, the reader vicariously experiences the hopelessness the boys feel at the hands of the priest.

Faithful to the authorial restraint of the ironic mode, Joyce did not insert "menacingly" or "diabolically" to modify "said" or "cried." It is enough that "any boy" is defined in a string of abusive adjectives: "any lazy idle little loafer" reveals Father Dolan's perverted feelings toward the boys under his care. Repetition also works in this passage to illuminate Father Dolan's deranged perception of boys. His priestly power has overcome and poisoned him so that all boys are all bad. The adjectives he uses to describe boys reveal a unilateral aberration. They are without exception, "lazy" and "idle." All are "loafers," but Stephen receives the distinction of being a "schemer" as well (293-6). The pandybatting scene is contained within three pages but it changes unalterably one's perception of Joyce's priests. In spite of the fact that the ironic Joyce refuses to utter the obvious, that Father Dolan is disturbed, cruel, and absolutely unfit in his role as educator, the reader nevertheless reaches Joyce's intended conclusion after considering the evidence

presented. This is an example of what Wayne Booth describes as author and audience meeting "like Voltaire and God, but they do not speak" (The Rhetoric of Fiction 272). Joyce does not "tell" the reader that the priest is sick; he "shows" the reader this by merely "recording the facts" of the priest's unjust beatings and his repetitive verbal abuse. In addition, Booth notes that "with commentary ruled out, hundreds of devices remain for revealing judgement and molding responses"(272). Among these is the careful selection of "what parts of the story to dramatize." (272) This is demonstrated when Joyce shapes the reader's response further by devoting three full paragraphs to describing Stephen's pain vividly.

The soutane sleeve swished again as the pandybat was lifted and a loud crashing sound and a fierce maddening tingling burning pain made his hand shrink together with the palms and fingers in a livid quivering mass. (295)

Even after experiencing intense pain and deciding "it was wrong; it was unfair and cruel," Stephen cannot reconcile the ideal and the conflicting reality.

...he suffered time after time in memory the same humiliation until he began to wonder whether it might not really be that there was something in his face which made him look like a schemer and he wished he had a little mirror to see. (298)

Similar to his realization and concurrent denial that Father Arnall was angry, Stephen attempts to find an excuse for Father Dolan's injustice. There is none. The ideal is that

priests are to be loving, to extend *caritas* in the manner of Christ. But the reality is that they can be cruel, sadistic; their punishment can be wrongfully executed.

There is no escape from their wrath or perversion. They are all-powerful and, though they commit the same sins for which they punish others, they are safe from retribution. Any small victory over their vengeance is erased, for Stephen's meeting with the rector is undercut by the fact that his father later tells him that he and Father Dolan have had "a great laugh" over the incident. Mr. Dedalus' attitude toward the priest who wrongly beat his son is warm:

"Shows the spirit in which they take the boys there. O, a jesuit for your life, for diplomacy!" (319-20) There is no escape from priests, and there is no relief or justice in a "priest-ridden race."

As Stephen matures, his battles with the priests become more subtle, but no less compelling. Priests now oppress with words, not pandy bats. The "fire-lighting" scene of Stephen Hero re-appears in A Portrait and is an example of this covert warfare. The skeletal plot remains the same: Stephen encounters a priest lighting a fire; the priest refers to the teachings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and misunderstands Stephen's quotation of Newman as an original statement. The purpose and effect of the revised passage, however, are entirely different from those of the original.



This scene is perhaps the most succinct example of Joyce's meticulous revision from the satire of Stephen Hero to the irony of A Portrait.

The priest crouched before the hearth in A Portrait has been recreated as the nameless Dean of Studies. This delicate change deletes the complete satiric ridicule of the name "Butt." And, at the same time, it suggests that he represents all others of his kind. The manner in which the Dean of Studies lights his fire and refers to Aquinas' classifications of art are also examples of revision from satire to irony. Joyce shows the reader throughout the revised scene that the Dean is not a buffoon, as was Father Butt, but is instead an intelligent and formidable adversary.

Joyce deletes from the ironic text the detail that the priest is making "a small fire in a huge grate," which, in the satiric mode, implies absurd futility. The actions of the Dean of Studies in A Portrait are described as being "brisk," "deft," "humble," and "nimble" (448-9). This greatly contrasts the overly precise operations of Father Butt, which culminate in his pretentious "triumph" (Stephen Hero 28). In the satiric text, Stephen condescends to Father Butt by helping him articulate his thoughts. It is Stephen who brings to mind Aquinas.

--There is an art, Mr. Daedalus, in lighting a fire.  
--So I see, sir. A very useful art.

--That's it: a useful art. We have the useful arts and we have the liberal arts. (Stephen Hero 28)

Father Butt's attitude throughout the original scene, as discussed earlier, illuminates that the useful arts are superior to the liberal.

In the ironic presentation, it is the Dean of Studies who first refers to Aquinas.

--One moment now, Mr. Dedalus, and you will see. There is an art is lighting a fire. We have the liberal arts and we have the useful arts. This is one of the useful arts. (A Portrait 448)

The mere reverse positioning of "liberal arts" suggests that the Dean of Studies lists them in order of importance. The paragraph following connects the word "service" to the priest twice, echoing Aquinas' division of the arts, with the useful arts being servile. This evidence suggests that the Dean interprets Aquinas correctly and intelligently, in stark contrast to his satiric prototype.

Even in speculative matters there is something by way of work; for example, the making of a syllogism or of a fitting speech, or the work of counting or measuring. Hence whatever habits are ordered to such works of the speculative reason are by a kind of comparison called arts indeed, but liberal arts, in order to distinguish them from those arts that are ordered to works done by the body, which arts are, in a fashion, servile, in so far as the body is in servile subjection to the soul, and man, as regards his soul, is free (liber). (Summa Theologica Vol. II, 37-8)

Furthermore, it is Stephen, not the Dean, who seems to admire the art of a well-made fire. He tells the priest that he will "try to learn" the skill (A Portrait 448). When Stephen, "to fill the silence," says "I am sure I could

not light a fire," the Dean completely changes the subject by raising the question of beauty (449). The priest's rejection of Stephen's hollow flattery is a quite different response from that which we would expect from Father Butt.

The Dean of Studies in A Portrait commits the same error that Father Butt does in Stephen Hero, but, again, his response is much different. Unlike Father Butt in the original scene, the Dean of Studies quickly realizes his mistake. Stephen, speaking of formal and informal discourse, uses the word "detain" as an example within the sentence "I hope I am not detaining you." The italics and underlining suggest that Stephen expects his example to be clearly understood, but the Dean, thinking Stephen is being apologetic, says politely, "Not in the least." He then rapidly ends Stephen's correction and reveals his embarrassment.

--Yes, yes: I see, said the dean quickly. I quite catch your point: detain.

He thrust forward his under jaw and uttered a dry short cough. (451-2)

Although he makes the same blunder as Father Butt, the Dean of Studies, in contrast, is immediately aware of his error. He speaks quickly, without any pausing, and the colon preceding "detain" makes it clear that the Dean does realize his mistake. The thrusting of his jaw and a forced "dry" cough illustrate a physical manifestation of his embarrassment.

In Joyce's ironic presentation, the Dean of Studies is mentally agile and emotionally complex, quite a different creature than Father Butt in the satiric presentation. Frye writes that irony "takes life exactly as it finds it." (40) Good and bad, respect and hatred, intelligence and ignorance are hopelessly interwoven. There are no absolutes in life, only ambiguity. Hence, A Portrait, as an ironic text, does not present the priest as an absolute buffoon. Joyce juxtaposes qualities such as power and inferiority, knowledge and ignorance, to simulate life and to force the reader to draw his own conclusions.

For these reasons, Joyce manipulates the reader's attitude throughout the revised fire-lighting scene in A Portrait. He stimulates one attitude in the opening of the passage, then undermines and reverses it in the closing of the passage. Compassion for the priest is elicited in the beginning of this scene: "...he seemed more than ever a humble server...His very body, waxed old in lowly service..." (448). In the beginning, the priest is presented as intelligent, signalling warrant for respect. He alludes to Aquinas and Coleridge; he is aware of Stephen's artistic abilities and believes in free thinking (448-50). The reader's attitude toward Stephen is manipulated as well. Stephen is initially presented as

polite and humbly self-deprecating. But Joyce changes all this.

Stephen gains confidence in his intelligence and capabilities. He uses the word "lamp" as an extended metaphor. The Dean, conversely, begins to lose footing in the intellectual parley, and wanders to tangential, banal comments about domestic lamps on three occasions (451-2). On the third instance, the Dean, attempting to draw attention away from his misunderstanding of Stephen's reference to Newman, "returns" to the subject of lamps and reveals his ignorance of the word "tundish" (452). The word is an old one, dating back to 1388, but the Dean is unfamiliar with it and unwittingly stammers in comic disbelief. "That is a most interesting word. I must look that word up. Upon my word I must" (452).

Stephen suddenly realizes that the Dean is English, a member of the race who has conquered his own and he feels utterly defeated by the fact that they are speaking in the language inflicted upon Ireland by the suzerain.

The little word seemed to have turned a rapier point...--The language in which we are speaking is his before mine.

...My soul frets in the shadow of his language. (453)

The Dean also feels defeated. His intellectual prowess has been usurped by a gangling undergraduate. What began as a polite, if not friendly, exchange ends in bitterness.

Stephen, disheartened suddenly by the dean's firm dry

tone was silent. The dean was also silent: and through the silence a distant noise of many boots and confused voices came up the staircase. (454)

The repeated silence offers only mutual isolation and mutual defeat. Even the voices of the students coming to class are not "boisterous" and "carefree," as one might expect, but have collapsed into vague confusion. It is as if the noise of the students echoes the fact that a significant meeting between priest and artist were nearly possible, then irrevocably eroded.

In a remarkable demonstration of economy, Joyce condenses every intent and purpose of this scene into one sentence, which parallels the manipulation of the reader's attitude.

*Similiter atque senis baculus*, he was, as the founder would have had him, like a staff in an old man's hand, to be left in a corner, to be leaned on in the road at nightfall or in stress of weather, to lie with a lady's nosegay on a garden seat, to be raised in menace. (450)

The first two-thirds of this sentence evoke some sense of pity for the priest; "like a staff in an old man's hand" implies impotence, futility. The next two phrases encapsulate what it must be to be a priest: to be alone, lonely, to be virtually forgotten until service is needed. The phrases then shift to the questionable and then to the decidedly sinister, changing dramatically the reader's perception. "Stress of weather" suggests sultry summer afternoons and the image of the staff lying with a lady's

nosegay in a garden is at once sexually suggestive and yet further asserts impotence. The staff is not used or even touched by females; the closest to the sex it can be is to "a lady's nosegay." Emma Clery flirting with priests comes to mind. Priests may be tantalized but not satisfied. "To be raised in menace" is startling and disturbing. The priest is used to evoke fear, to frighten one into salvation. He can be used to stifle thought and to persecute others. The threat of injury is clear in this image and more sinister still is the fact that he is "as the founder would have had him": all the negativity of powerlessness, loneliness, unfulfilled sexual desire, and sheer terror is exactly what God wants from his mediator. Here, God has no compassion, no concern for human freedom or happiness.

The powerful subtlety of this sentence is not possible within the satiric context of Stephen Hero. There is not an instant that we consider the humanness of Father Butt, nor a moment that we fear him. The satire makes clear Joyce's feelings and what ours should be; Father Butt is unvaryingly absurd, unceasingly contemptible. The revised episode in A Portrait gives us ambiguity. It leaves us struggling for an absolute, but it ends, in the tradition of irony, with little satire, which Frye describes as "the non-heroic residue of tragedy, centering on a theme of puzzled defeat"

(224). In this objective presentation of two men, neither is spared and both feel conquered.

If the preceding chapters fail in convincing the reader that priests are dangerously powerful, Joyce calls upon the church's own armament to conquer any doubters. Chapter Three of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is an unforgettable testament to the awful power of the priest and is a masterful example of irony's demand for collusion. The reader must endure the three days' retreat in honor of Francis Xavier as do Stephen and the other boys in the college. Joyce does not excuse his reader from any of the experience by narrative summary, but instead shows off his versatility and prowess as a master of conventional religious rhetoric as he adopts the persona of priest, wielding fear as a lethal weapon. After enduring the ponderous and forceful retreat along with Stephen, the reader is forced into decisions about priests and Catholicism. After Chapter Three, he has, in a small way, a common experience with Stephen and becomes part of the text. Joyce need not lecture upon the oppression at the hands of priests; he need not explicate the paradox of self-denial in hopes of eventual salvation; the reader is assaulted along with Stephen and is able to fill in these gaps for himself. His decisions are based on his own reaction to the priest's sermons and on Stephen's reactions.



Stephen may be on equal footing with the Dean of Studies and he may cleverly trick the rector out of being harsh with the boys in catechism (357-9), but he cannot escape the agony of the sermon, nor stop himself from succumbing to the powerful rhetoric depicting a grotesque Hell waiting for him. This is the integral power of the priest; he possesses the power to pull man into salvation or push him into the searing flames of Hell. The reader is better able to understand the paralysis of Joyce's characters as they tremble in the shadow of the priest. Instead of using the power positively, that is, by celebrating the possibility of spending an eternity in paradise, the priest wields his power to instill fear; he evokes the most frightening images possible to terrify the faithful into a "good" life. Instead of inspiring obedience to himself and God, the priest beats the parishioner into submission. "The faint glimmer of fear became a terror of spirit as the hoarse voice of the preacher blew death into his soul" (365). The irony here is keen. God blew life into the world; it seems his representative should do likewise, but he instead "blows death" into the soul. Without exception, the sermon concentrates on the horrors of Hell.

Imagine some foul and putrid corpse that has lain rotting and decomposing in the grave, a jellylike mass of liquid corruption. Imagine such a corpse a prey to flames, devoured by the fire of burning

brimstone and giving off dense choking fumes of nauseous loathsome decomposition. And then imagine this sickening stench, multiplied a millionfold and a millionfold again from the millions upon the millions of fetid carcasses massed together in the reeking darkness, a huge and rotting human fungus. Imagine all this and you will have some idea of the horror of the stench of hell. (375)

The repugnant details worsen as the passage progresses, which is impressive, considering the disgust initially engendered by the "foul and putrid corpse that has lain rotting and decomposing." The reader is commanded again and again to "imagine" the reality behind the words; once doing so, the scene becomes more grotesque until it reaches a crescendo of abhorrence that can emotionally evolve no further: millions of rotting bodies massed together to become an inseparable "rotting human fungus." The relentless succession of details tenaciously holds the attention of the audience to the mythic horror of Hell. The first image is indeed disgusting but if it were a singular image, the audience could more easily put it out of mind. Instead, the cumulative effect is a barrage of images that cannot be ignored. Several rhetorical figures are employed in the process. They include anaphora, or the repetition of beginnings; accumulation, or repetition in other words; and diacope, or repetition with only a word or two between (Quinn 101, 102). The careful echoing of the command to "imagine" forces the reader to become a participant and to construct a mental image of each ghastly scene; the echoing

of the "millionfold" and "millions" imposes of a sense of vastness and of hopelessness that await the Hellbound soul. Repetition is an effective vehicle of memory; Father Arnall's sermon employs it in hope that the boys will not forget the horror of that which awaits them if they do not confess. The priest's powerful command of language here in A Portrait is far beyond his befuddlement in Stephen Hero.

If the reader has actively participated as the sermon commands and has allowed himself to become prey to the power of its rhetoric, then Joyce has succeeded in two important aspects. He has accomplished the feat of introducing the reader to the truly frightening power of the priest and to the fear tactics that are used to force one into salvation. Second, he has succeeded in making more understandable the characters' voluntary enslavement to Priest and Church, thus making Stephen's final flight more dramatic. The ironic presentation of the priest in A Portrait is a dark, foreboding one, quite unlike the light-hearted ridicule of Stephen Hero. It is, however, no less a derogatory presentation of its subject and, in fact, the revision to irony is more effective. Even if one succumbs to the power of the priest's rhetoric and yields to his tender begging-- "His arms are open to receive you even though you have sinned against Him, come to Him, poor sinner, poor vain and erring sinner"--and does indeed confess, his problems are

far from over (392). There is a hopeless gap between priestly demands and daily practice. No one wants to go to Hell, but exactly how does one avoid it? The priest urges Stephen through fear to seek salvation, but has offered no guidance, save confession. After expiation, what action need one take? The sermon gives the illusion that a sinless life is an easy one; with one decision, the road to Heaven is short and smooth. Father Arnall, as Joseph A. Buttigieg notes, "fosters illusions by employing an aesthetic stance of omniscience; he speaks with certitude, as if he has an all-encompassing vision" (131). Illusion it certainly is, and it is problematic rather than comforting. The illusion is that the priest is God, or God-like, and hence unaffected by the yearnings of a human body; his purity seems somehow unattainable. The priest is, of course, just as human as the boys seated before him; it seems prudent that he admit the immediate attractiveness of sin and offer pragmatic advice on winning the daily struggle. He instead instructs the boys to confess their sins; no other information on how to attain Heaven is offered. Father Arnall presents faith as "comforting rather than challenging" (Buttigieg 131). The sermon offers faith as a consoling womb, when, in fact, it is more like a battlefield upon which soldiers struggle to deny and defeat their human needs and desires.

Given these illusions, these double-binds and gaps in truth, it seems nearly impossible that any one could survive in the faith. A Portrait presents Catholicism as a cruel and confusing maze of rules; it seems then that the rational and sane response is to escape, but to escape is perilous, with Hell's gaping jaws in wait. Completely out of his element, the priest as educator in Stephen Hero is absurd; he doesn't know about that which he speaks and is dismissed fairly easily by Stephen and reader alike. But at home behind the pulpit, the sermonizing priest in A Portrait is ambivalent and dangerous. He demands the nearly impossible--leading a sinless life--but does not provide any instruction or direction to accomplish the feat. The irony of his argument is paradoxical; God's arms are open to receive his children, but if they err, His arms are just as ready to crush these same children into Hell. The absence of humor in the ironic presentation of priests is crucial to the tone of A Portrait and to the significance of Stephen's flight from Church and country. His quest for freedom from the nets of Church, country, and family facilitates his birth as an artist. In the original text, the departure from Ireland is no surprise. Stephen's anti-priestly feelings are clear throughout; there is no change of character, no monumental decision. His past as a good Catholic is briefly mentioned, but in the context of this

novel, it is difficult to imagine Stephen "clamoring for forgiveness and promising endless penances.." (Stephen Hero 57). The revision of the priest's character from being impotent and doddering to a powerful and dangerous nature recreates Stephen's decision to leave from an inevitable response to a solemn act of courage and conviction. The shift in tone from satiric to ironic makes poignant Stephen's proclamation to Cranly that "I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too" (519). It is one of the few passages in A Portrait in which the reader feels certain of how to regard Stephen. The priests have taught him well; he confesses he fears that there is a "malevolent reality" behind the act of communion (515). The reader, having endured the retreat, understands that Stephen feels he is indeed taking a risk by forsaking his past altogether. The reader knows that Stephen believes that there may indeed be an angry God waiting to cast him into Hell for leaving the Church, but he is willing to endure an eternity of punishment for a mortal life of freedom and creativity. The reader is moved to respect Stephen's courage in A Portrait, which sharply contrasts with the reader's response in Stephen Hero, wherein Stephen's "flight" is more like a lingering vacation. The revised, ironic presentation of priests in A Portrait revises the attitude of the reader

toward not only the priests, but to Stephen himself and his quest to "express himself freely and wholly" as well (519). It is much easier to leave behind chaos than it is to court disaster; hence, the reader applauds Stephen's resolution to become his own priest: "Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (526).

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### A FEW FINAL WORDS

Wayne C. Booth offers keen insight into Joyce's first attempt at a novel and the restless dissatisfaction that proved to be the catalyst for the metamorphosis from Stephen Hero to A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

A supreme egoist struggling to deal artistically with his own ego, a humorist who could not escape the comic consequences of his portrait of that inflated ego, he faced, in the completed Stephen Hero, what he had to recognize as a hodge-podge of irreconcilables. Is Stephen a pompous ass or not? Is his name deliberately ridiculous, as Stanislaus, who invented it, says? Or is it a serious act of symbolism? The way out seems inevitable, but it seems a retreat nonetheless: simply present the "reality" and let the reader judge. Cut all of the author's judgments, cut all of the adjectives, produce one long, ambiguous epiphany. (The Rhetoric of Fiction 332-333)

Booth is, however, somewhat harsh and over-simplifying by judging Joyce's revision as a "way out" and "a retreat." I do agree with Booth that "a price is paid" in exchanging the mosaic of Stephen Hero's "irony and admiration in unpredictable mixtures" for the consistent authorial silence of A Portrait (Fiction 334). The reader exchanges humor, richness, and the comforting guidance of a satiric author for the sharp intellectual challenge of decision forced upon the reader by an "objective," ironic author. But I argue that Joyce's revision is not a simple "retreat" from literary difficulties. Comparing the priests of the early, satiric Stephen Hero to the priests of the polished, ironic



A Portrait, one can trace Joyce's stylistic maturation and examine how he revised not only his work, but the responses of his reader, as well.

In the manuscript of Stephen Hero, priests are consistently absurd and are consequently discounted by both Stephen and the reader. The priests are neither invisible nor forgotten but they simply are not regarded as a serious threat to anyone. The priests are human cobwebs: annoying, but easily brushed aside. They are so because satire by its very nature constructs types, not individuals. Irony, in contrast, deals with individuals rather than two-dimensional caricatures. The reader of an ironic work cannot simply disregard problematic characters as can the reader of a satiric work. In A Portrait, priests are, without exception, powerful individuals. Joyce demonstrates this throughout the text in a variety of ways: the authoritative Dolan unjustly beats little boys; the educated but banal Dean of Studies "conquers" Stephen; the sermonizing Father Arnall rhetorically paralyzes both Stephen and the reader. Joyce does not "retreat." His revision from satire to irony forces the reader to conclude that priests are indeed the "usurpers" of man's individuality, expression, and emotion. The effect of the ironic presentation is that the reader must take the priests seriously. Joyce compels the reader to decide that the priest is a threat to humanity, a

formidable foe who cannot be ridiculed out of existence. By presenting "the facts" of priestly domination objectively--without authorial comment--Joyce forces the reader to draw conclusions through vicarious experience made possible by irony. The astute reader has no choice but to decide that Joyce's priests are pernicious.

Presenting Stephen's Irish Catholic life from early childhood to final escape not only provides a gestational structure, it also works to illustrate the lifelong oppression of priests upon their subjects from cradle to grave. Thus, the reader can better understand Irish submissiveness to priestly tyranny. These Catholics are bred, born, and die in the shadow of the priest. In Stephen Hero, empathy for the Irish Catholic is not evoked; in A Portrait, it is, as Frye writes, "reflected to the reader from the art" (Anatomy 40).

It is true that many of the greatest triumphs of Stephen Hero are lost or depleted in A Portrait, such as the oddly omniscient scene in which a lonely boy, opening and closing the flaps of his ears as he sits in the refectory, is described while Stephen stands outside, the complete "convent girls" passage, Stephen's sexual proposal to Emma, and the character of the whore in the black straw hat. A Portrait forfeits much of the entertaining humor of Stephen Hero because of the revision to create an ironic

presentation of priests. But, in exchange, the reader is offered the opportunity to secretly collude with James Joyce. Stanislaus Joyce writes that James "believed in individual freedom more thoroughly than any man I have ever known" (My Brother's Keeper 107-8). It seems appropriate, then, that Joyce demands his reader's individuality by leaving gaps that his reader must fill. The intelligent reader is challenged to decode the authorial silence, to work to extricate Joyce's intended meaning. Like Plato, Joyce quietly leads his reader to knowledge. It may appear that Joyce is off "paring his fingernails," but, actually, his hand rests upon the reader's shoulder throughout the text until he, too, comes to believe that Irish priests are usurpers of the human spirit.

Perhaps the problem with critics is that we insist upon an exchange price. The fact is that both Stephen Hero and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man are valuable literary works, worthy of examination and praise for separate and individual merits.

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